

Claims

1. A method for detecting the presence or absence of fragments of circulating cancer cells in an anticoagulated whole blood sample, said method comprising the steps of:
 - a) providing a transparent container having a chamber containing an insert, said container and insert combining to form a well-defined zone in the container;
 - b) combining the blood sample with one or more cell fragment binding site-specific labeling agents so as to differentiate any cancer cell fragments in the blood sample from other blood sample components;
 - c) placing the blood sample in the container and centrifuging the blood sample in the container so as to cause any cancer cell fragments present in the blood sample to gravitate by density into said well-defined zone in the container; and
 - f) examining the well-defined zone in the container to determine the presence or absence of labeled cancer cell fragments in the blood sample.